This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

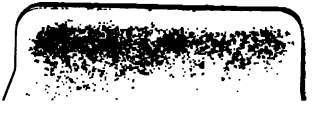
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

600083888+



CHEAP SCHOOL BOOKS.

IT is proposed to publish a series of very cheap School Books, books containing from fifty to one hundred pages, in strong cloth binding, which will be sold at prices varying from Sixpence to One Shilling.

School Books are seldom preserved for any length of time. They are exposed to many accidents, and, if they survive these in a presentable form, they often become obsolete before they reach the hands of another generation. At the same time they often contain much more than, as a matter of fact, can be made use of. Small books, sold at a low price, which would serve for a term, or a half-year, and would be read from beginning to end, would, it is thought, be found by parents to effect an economy in what is often a heavy expense. Schoolmasters, too, would be thus enabled to give a variety to the studies of their pupils, which is now frequently prohibited by considerations of cost.

The following books of the series are just ready:—

1. OVID. Select passages; with Notes and Introductions by the Rev. A. J. CHURCH, M.A., Head Master of the Grammar School, Henley-on-Thames. 16mo, cloth, 6d.

2. HORACE. Select Odes; with Notes and Introductions by the Rev. W. J. BRODRIBB, M.A., Rector of Wootton Rivers, and late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. 16mo, cloth, 8d.

3. CÆSAR. Selections from the Commentaries, including the British Expeditions. With Notes by the Rev. F. B. BUTLER, Assistant Master in Haileybury College. 16mo, cloth, 6d.

4. MILTON. Comus, Lycidas, L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, and select Sonnets. With Notes and Introductions by the Rev. H. R. HUCKIN, M.A., Fourth Master in Merchant Taylors' School. 16mo, cloth, 8d.

SEELEY, JACKSON, & HALLIDAY, 54, FLEET STREET,
LONDON. MDCCCLXXI.

MILTON.

COMUS,
LYCIDAS, L'ALLEGRO, IL PENSEROSO,
AND SELECTED SONNETS.

WITH NOTES
BY
THE REV. HENRY B. HUCKIN, M.A.,
FOURTH MASTER AT MERCHANT TAYLORS' SCHOOL.

SEELEY, JACKSON, & HALLIDAY, FLEET STREET,
LONDON. MDCCCLXXI.

280. n. 363.

PREFATORY NOTICE.

JOHN MILTON was born in London on the 9th of December, 1608, and died there on the 8th of November, 1674. He was thus a witness of the stirring events of the great Rebellion, in which he played a considerable part. He was educ[illegible] Cambridge, where, at a very early age, he att[illegible]ion by his brilliant talents. After leaving [illegible]ome time upon the Continent, [illegible]conversant with various lan[illegible]ature and the history of the [illegible] seems to have there [illegible]d a vehement hatred [illegible]ifest themselves. in [illegible]for a time in great [illegible]ress could affect the [illegible]r of his feelings and [illegible]ngaged upon writings

of the most varied description, and the fertility of his genius seems inexhaustible.

When Cromwell became Protector, he chose Milton for his confidential secretary, partly because so ardent an admirer of liberty could not fail to add lustre to the cause which he espoused; partly because Milton's great knowledge of Latin was invaluable in deciphering and preparing political documents—for at that time Latin was the language of diplomacy; and partly because between the two men there existed a real affection, and each had a real admiration of the genius of the other. During this time Milton's sight began to fail him, and he became almost blind—a circumstance which gave rise to the sarcastic witticism of the Swedish Envoy: "There is but one man in England who can write Latin, and he is blind." This sad infirmity increased until Milton was completely deprived of sight.

After the Restoration, the poet was forced to seek the shelter of absolute seclusion from the world; yet, even then, his life was in great danger from the vengeance of the Royalists; but his misfortunes were perhaps his safeguard. During his retirement he passed the greater part of his time in composing his great Epic of Paradise Lost, in which, as his blindness prevented him from writing, he was assisted by his daughters, who seem ever to have been ready to render him their aid. It is said that most of his brilliant passages were composed at night.

So little was Milton appreciated by his fellow-countrymen, that he received for his great Poem, which perhaps

stands highest among the productions of English poets, only five pounds. The first who directed the attention of Englishmen to the splendid merits of their countryman, was Addison ; and since his time, Milton has ever ranked with the great Epic poets, the Greek Homer, the Roman Virgil, and the Italian Dante. Less original than the first, less polished than the second, less imaginative than the third, Milton will yet not suffer from comparison with his great rivals ; and we may well excuse whatever of exaggeration is found in the famous lines of Dryden :—

"Three poets in three distant ages born :
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
The next in majesty; in both the last.
The force of nature could no farther go
To make a third, she joined the former two."

COMUS, A MASK.

PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE.

THE PERSONS.

The attendant SPIRIT, afterwards in the habit of THYRSIS.
COMUS with his crew.
The LADY.
First BROTHER.
Second BROTHER.
SABRINA the Nymph.

The chief persons who presented were
The Lord BRACKLEY.
Mr. THOMAS EGERTON, his brother.
The Lady ALICE EGERTON.

COMUS, the son of Bacchus and Circe, was a sorcerer, and the patron of revelry. His delight was to allure heedless travellers by proffering all kinds of riotous pleasures. Those who fell into his snares lost their human countenances, and received instead the heads of unclean animals, such as swine, goats, and the like.

A lady and her two brothers are represented as losing their way at nightfall in a wood haunted by Comus. The two brothers are compelled to leave their sister in order to try and recover the path. While the lady is left alone, Comus endeavours to induce her to become one of his followers, but she refuses to adopt his pleasures, refutes his reasonings, and the sorcerer is only able, by his spells, to rivet her to her seat. The two brothers, guided by an attendant Spirit, who has assumed the form of one of their father's shepherds, are enabled to discover their sister. But Comus escapes them, and the lady is only set free by the intervention of the Nymph Sabrina.

The poem is intended to show the beauty and the strength of virtue.

It was acted as a mask, or masquerade, in the gardens of Ludlow Castle for the entertainment of the family of the Earl of Bridgewater.

THE FIRST SCENE DISCOVERS A WILD WOOD.

The Attendant SPIRIT *descends or enters.*

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aerial spirits live inspher'd
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call Earth, and with low-thoughted care
Confin'd, and pester'd in this pinfold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants,
Amongst the enthron'd Gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key,
That opes the palace of eternity;
To such my errand is; and but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.
But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
That like to rich and various gems inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep;
Which he, to grace his tributary Gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents: but this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities;

And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old and haughty nation proud in arms :
Where his fair offspring, nurs'd in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-intrusted sceptre ; but their way
Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger ;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sovereign Jove
I was dispatch'd for their defence and guard ;
And listen why, for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.
Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell : who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine ?
This Nymph that gaz'd upon his clust'ring locks,
With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd :
Who ripe, and frolic of his full grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
And in thick shelter of black shades imbower'd
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus, which as they taste,
(For most do taste through fond intemp'rate thirst)
Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,

Th' express resemblance of the Gods, is chang'd
Into some brutish form of wolf or bear,
Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were;
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before,
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
Therefore, when any favour'd of high Jove
Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heav'n, to give him safe convoy,
As now I do: But first I must put off
These my sky robes spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain,
That to the service of this house belongs,
Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods, nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch,
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps, I must be viewless now.

COMUS *enters with a charming rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistering; they come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.*

COMUS. The star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal

Of his chamber in the east.
Meanwhile welcome Joy, and Feast,
Midnight Shout and Revelry,
Tipsy Dance and Jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.
Rigour now is gone to bed,
And Advice with scrupulous head,
Strict Age, and sour Severity,
With their grave saws in slumber lie.
We that are of purer fire
Imitate the starry quire,
Who in their nightly watchful spheres
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
And on the tawny sands and shelves
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.
By dimpled brook, and fountain brim,
The wood-nymphs deck'd with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep;
What hath night to do with sleep?
Night hath better sweets to prove,
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come let us our rights begin,
'Tis only day-light that makes sin,
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
Hail Goddess of nocturnal sport,
Dark-veil'd Cotytto, t' whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame,
That ne'er art call'd, but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air;
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat, and befriend
Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out,
Ere the babbling Eastern scout,
The nice morn, on th' Indian steep

From her cabin'd loophole peep,
And to the tell-tale sun descry
Our conceal'd solemnity.
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantastic round.

THE MEASURE.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees;
Our number may affright: Some virgin sure
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)
Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains; I shall ere long
Be well-stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd
About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spungy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsel to suspicious flight,
Which must not be, for that's against my course:
I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well-plac'd words of glozing courtesy
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes, I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

THE LADY ENTERS.

This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now; methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,

Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe
Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds,
When for their teeming flocks, and granges full,
In wanton dance, they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the Gods amiss. I should be loath
To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence
Of such late wassailers; yet O where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My Brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stepp'd, as they said, to the next thicket side
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then, when the gray-hooded Even
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain.
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest
They had engag'd their wand'ring steps too far;
And envious darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me: else, O thievish Night,
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
That nature hung in heav'n, and fill'd their lamps
With everlasting oil, to give due light
To the misled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may guess,
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my list'ning ear,
Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beck'ning shadows dire,
And airy tongues, that syllable men's names
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended

By a strong-siding champion, Conscience.—
O welcome pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering Angel, girt with golden wings,
And thou, unblemish'd form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe
That he, the Supreme Good, t' whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glist'ring guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honour unassail'd.
Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err, there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove:
I cannot halloo to my Brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
I'll venture, for my new enliven'd spirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

SWEET Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flow'ry cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the sphere!
So mayst thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heav'n's harmonies.

Enter COMUS.

COM. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould

Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence:
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smil'd! I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
Amidst the flow'ry-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs, and baleful drugs,
Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
And lap it in Elysium; Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself;
But such a sacred, and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. Hail, foreign wonder!
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan, or Silvan, by blest song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

LAD. Nay, gentle Shepherd, ill is lost that praise
That is address'd to unattending ears;
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo
To give me answer from her mossy couch.

COM. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?

LAD. Dim darkness, and this leafy labyrinth.

COM. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?

LAD. They left me weary on a grassy turf.

COM. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

LAD. To seek i' th' valley some cool friendly spring.

COM. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

LAD. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.
COM. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.
LAD. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
COM. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
LAD. No less than if I should my Brothers lose.
COM. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
LAD. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.
COM. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swink'd hedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human, as they stood:
I took it for a faery vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-struck,
And as I pass'd, I worshipp'd; if those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to heaven,
To help you find them.
LAD. Gentle Villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place?
COM. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.
LAD. To find that out, good Shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practis'd feet.
COM. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle or bushy dell of this wild wood,
And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And if your stray attendants be yet lodg'd
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatch'd pallet rouse; if otherwise
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.

LAD. Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was nam'd,
And yet is most pretended: in a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
To my proportion'd strength. Shepherd, lead on.

Enter The TWO BROTHERS.

1 BR. Unmuffle, ye faint stars, and thou, fair moon,
That wont'st to love the traveller's benizon,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or if your influence be quite damm'd up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush candle, from the wicker-hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long-levell'd rule of streaming light;
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

2 BR. Or if our eyes
Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of past'ral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering
In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs.
But O that hapless virgin, our lost Sister,
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, among rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears.

What, if in wild amazement, and affright,
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?
1 BR. Peace, Brother, be not over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils;
For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion!
I do not think my Sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where with her best nurse Contemplation
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all-to ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.
He that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit i' th' centre, and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.
2 BR. 'Tis most true,
That musing meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in a senate house;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence?
But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree

Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit
From the rash hand of bold incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned Sister.

1 BR. I do not, Brother,
Infer, as if I thought my Sister's state
Secure without all doubt, or controversy;
Yet where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate th' event, my nature is
That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My Sister is not so defenceless left,
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength
Which you remember not.

2 BR. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heav'n, if you mean that?

1 BR. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength
Which, if heav'n gave it, may be term'd her own;
'Tis chastity, my Brother, chastity;
She that has that, is clad in complete steel,
And like a quiver'd Nymph with arrows keen
May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds,
Where through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandit, or mountaineer
Will dare to soil her virgin purity:
Yea there, where very desolation dwells,
By grots, and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblench'd majesty,

Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog, or fire, by lake, or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin, or swart fairy of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tam'd the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; Gods and men
Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' th' woods.
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace that dash'd brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to heav'n is saintly chastity,
That when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
And in clear dream, and solemn vision,
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear,
Till oft converse with heav'nly habitants
Begins to cast a beam on th' outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal: but when lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.

Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel vaults, and sepulchres,
Ling'ring and sitting by a new made grave,
As loath to leave the body that it lov'd,
And link'd itself by carnal sensuality
To a degenerate and degraded state.
2 BR. How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.
1 BR. List, list, I hear
Some far off halloo break the silent air.
2 BR. Methought so too; what should it be?
1 BR. For certain
Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.
2 BR. Heav'n keep my Sister. Again, again, and near;
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.
1 BR. I'll halloo;
If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good cause, and Heav'n be for us.

Enter the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *habited like a shepherd.*

That halloo I should know, what are you? speak:
Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.
SPIR. What voice is that? my young Lord? speak again?
2 BR. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.
1 BR. Thyrsis? Whose artful strains have oft delay'd
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale.
How cam'st thou here, good swain? hath any ram
Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
How could'st thou find this dark sequester'd nook?
SPIR. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,
I came not here on such a trivial toy

As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth
That doth enrich these downs is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But O, my virgin Lady, where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?
1 BR. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame,
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.
SPIR. Aye me unhappy! then my fears are true.
1 BR. What fears, good Thyrsis? Prithee briefly show.
SPIR. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous,
Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance,
What the sage poets, taught by th' heavenly Muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse,
Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles,
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.
Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immur'd in cypress shades a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries,
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Character'd in the face: this I have learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' th' hilly crofts,
That brow this bottom-glade, whence, night by night,
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits, and guileful spells,
T' inveigle and invite th' unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb

Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honey-suckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill, but, ere a close,
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance;
At which I ceas'd, and listen'd them a while,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy frighted steeds,
That draw the litter of close-curtain'd sleep;
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displac'd. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of death: but O ere long
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear Sister.
Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,
And O poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till guided by mine ear I found the place,
Where that damn'd wizard, hid in sly disguise,
(For so by certain signs I knew) had met
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent Lady, his wish'd prey,
Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two,
Supposing him some neighbour villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight, till I had found you here,
But further know I not.

2 BR. O night and shades,
How are ye join'd with Hell in triple knot,
Against th' unarmed weakness of one virgin,
Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, Brother?
1 BR. Yes, and keep it still,
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me: against the threats
Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm,
Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt,
Surpris'd by unjust force, but not enthrall'd;
Yea even that, which mischief meant most harm,
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory:
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness, when at last
Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed, and self-consumed: if this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on.
Against the opposing will and arm of heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up;
But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
With all the grisly legions that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
And force him to return his purchase back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Curs'd as his life.
SPIR. Alas! good vent'rous Youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead;
Far other arms and other weapons must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms:
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.
1 BR. Why prithee, Shepherd,

How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
As to make this relation?
SPIR. Care and utmost shifts
How to secure the Lady from surprisal,
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
In every virtuous plant and healing herb,
That spreads her verdant leaf to th' morning ray:
He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing,
Which when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit, and hearken e'en to ecstasy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties:
Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he cull'd me out;
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
But in another country, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flow'r, but not in this soil:
Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon:
And yet more med'cinal is it than that moly
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave;
He call'd it hæmony, and gave it me,
And bad me keep it as of sovereign use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,
Or ghastly furies' apparition.
I purs'd it up, but little reck'ning made,
Till now that this extremity compell'd:
But now I find it true; for by this means
I knew the foul enchanter, though disguis'd,
Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells,
And yet came off: if you have this about you,
(As I will give you when we go) you may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
And brandish'd blade rush on him, break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
But seize his wand; though he and his curs'd crew

Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.
1 BR. Thyrsis, lead on apace, I'll follow thee,
And some good Angel bear a shield before us.

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness; soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS *appears with his rabble, and the* LADY *set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.*

COM. Nay, Lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster,
And you a statue, or as Daphne was
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.
LAD. Fool, do not boast,
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while heav'n sees good.
COM. Why are you vext, Lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far: See, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames, and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm, and fragrant syrups mix'd.
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such pow'r to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs which Nature lent
For gentle usage, and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you receiv'd on other terms;

Scorning the unexempt condition
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tir'd all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted ; but, fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.
LAD. 'Twill not, false traitor,
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the Cottage, and the safe abode
Thou toldst me of ? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters ? Mercy guard me !
Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver ;
Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
With visor'd falsehood and base forgery ?
And would'st thou seek again to trap me here
With liquorish baits fit to ensnare a brute ?
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer ; none
But such as are good men can give good things,
And that which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.
COM. O foolishness of men ! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth,
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please, and sate the curious taste ?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk
To deck her sons ; and that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutch'd th' all-worshipp'd ore, and precious gems,
To store her children with : if all the world
Should in a pet of temp'rance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,

Th' All-giver would be unthank'd, would be unprais'd,
Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd ;
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth ;
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility ;
Th' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark'd with plumes,
The herds would over-multitude their lords,
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and th' unsought diamonds
Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady, be not coy, and be not cozen'd
With that same vaunted name Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current, and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in th' enjoyment of itself ;
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship ;
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence ; coarse complexions,
And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn ?
There was another meaning in these gifts,
Think what, and be advis'd, you are but young yet.

LAD. I had not thought to have unlockt my lips
In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb.

I hate when vice can bolt her arguments,
And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Impostor, do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance; she, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare temperance:
If every just man, that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeming share
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispens'd
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no wit encumber'd with her store;
And then the giver would be better thank'd,
His praise due paid; for swinish gluttony
Ne'er looks to heav'n amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enough? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad pow'r of Chastity,
Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery,
That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of Virginity,
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence,
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinc'd;
Yet should I try, the uncontrolled worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
And the brute earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magic structures rear'd so high,

Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false head.
COM. She fables not, I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power:
And though not mortal, yet a cold shudd'ring dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly. Come, no more,
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon-laws of our foundation;
I must not suffer this, yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood:
But this will cure all straight, one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

The BROTHERS *rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The* ATTENDANT SPIRIT *comes in.*

SPIR. What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
O ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd his wand,
And bound him fast; without his rod revers'd,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless:
Yet stay, be not disturb'd: now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be us'd,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The soothest shepherd that e'er pip'd on plains.
There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
Whilome she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,

That stay'd her flight with his cross-flowing course.
The water-nymphs that in the bottom play'd,
Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall,
Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectar'd lavers strow'd with asphodel,
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropp'd in ambrosial oils, till she reviv'd,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made Goddess of the river; still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling elf delights to make,
Which she with precious vial'd liquors heals.
For which the shepherds at their festivals
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invok'd in warbled song,
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard-besetting need; this will I try,
And add the pow'r of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
  Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
  In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
  Listen for dear honour's sake,
  Goddess of the silver lake,
    Listen and save.
Listen and appear to us

In name of great Oceanus,
By th' earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace,
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
And the songs of Sirens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks,
By all the nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answer'd have.
Listen and save.

SABRINA *rises, attended by water-nymphs, and sings.*

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet,
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread;
Gentle Swain, at thy request
I am here.
SP. Goddess dear,

We implore thy pow'rful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distrest,
Through the force, and through the wile
Of unblest enchanter vile.

SABR. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help insnared chastity:
Brightest Lady, look on me;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops that from my fountain pure
I have kept of precious cure,
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip;
Next this marble venom'd seat,
Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold:
Now the spell hath lost his hold;
And I must haste ere morning hour
To wait in Amphitrite's bow'r.

SABRINA *descends, and the* LADY *rises out of her seat.*

SP. Virgin, daughter of Locrine
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand petty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills:
Summer drouth, or singed air
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl, and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crown'd
With many a tow'r and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.

Come, Lady, while heav'n lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursed place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste, or needless sound,
Till we come to holier ground;
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide,
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wish'd presence, and beside
All the swains that there abide,
With jigs, and rural dance resort;
We shall catch them at their sport,
And our sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer;
Come, let us haste, the stars grow high,
But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the President's castle; then come in country dancers, after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *with the* TWO BROTHERS, *and the* LADY.

SONG.

SP. Back, Shepherds, back, enough your play,
Till next sunshine holiday;
Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise,
With the mincing Dryades,
On the lawns, and on the leas.

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight,

Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own;
Heav'n hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual folly, and intemperance.

The dances ended, the SPIRIT *epiloguises.*

SP. To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky:
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree:
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring,
The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring;
There eternal Summer dwells,
And west-winds, with musky wing,
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purfled scarf can show,
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits th' Assyrian queen;
But far above in spangled sheen

Celestial Cupid her fam'd son advanc'd,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet intranc'd,
After her wand'ring labours long,
Till free consent the Gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue, she alone is free,
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime:
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heav'n itself would stoop to her.

LYCIDAS.

THIS Poem was written as an elegy in memory of Milton's friend, Edward King, who was drowned on the passage between Chester and Ireland (see line 50). Edward King was twenty-five years old at the time of his death, and distinguished at Cambridge by his learning and piety. In the course of the poem the river Cam (Camus) is introduced, lamenting his promising child; and St. Peter (line 108), who draws a bitter comparison between the character of Lycidas and the sordid spirit of some of the clergy. In this we have an instance of Milton's strong hostility to an Established Church.

This Poem is what is called a Pastoral, or one in which the persons introduced are represented as Shepherds. The language is made to suit this idea, and is therefore highly metaphorical and figurative.

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forc'd fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.

Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse,
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destin'd urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose, at evening, bright,
Toward heav'n's descent had slop'd his west'ring wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to th' oaten flute,
Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long,
And old Damœtas lov'd to hear our song.
But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen,
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flow'rs, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:
Ay me! I fondly dream!

Had ye been there, for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His goary visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. But not the praise,
Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;
Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glist'ring foil
Set off to th' world, nor in broad rumour lies;
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heav'n expect thy meed.
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea;
He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?
And question'd every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory:
They knew not of his story,

And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd,
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in th' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flow'r inscrib'd with woe.
Ah! who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain)
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake,
How well could I have spar'd for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold?
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearer's feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest;
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said;
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.
Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast

Their bells, and flow'rets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks:
Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid amarantus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strow the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! Whilst thee the shores, and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;
Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth.
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky;
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of him that walk'd the waves,

Where other groves, and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the Shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to th' oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray,
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay;
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night raven sings ;
There under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come thou Goddess fair and free,
In heav'n y-clep'd Euphrosyne,
And by Men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore ;
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying;
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips, and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
Nods, and Becks, and wreathed Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek ;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe ;
And in thy right hand lead with thee

The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tow'r in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumb'ring morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Some time walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Rob'd in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his sithe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
Whilst the landscape round it measures;
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest;

Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide.
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some Beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighb'ring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses ;
And then in haste the bow'r she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves ;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tann'd haycock in the mead,
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequer'd shade ;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the live-long daylight fail ;
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How fairy Mab the junkets eat ;
She was pinch'd, and pull'd, she said,
And he by friars' lanthorn led,
Tells how the drudging Goblin sweat,
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
That ten day-lab'rers could not end ;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of door he flings,

Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.
Tower'd cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry,
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE, vain deluding joys,
  The brood of folly without father bred,
How little you bestead,
  Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys?
Dwell in some idle brain,
  And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
  As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
Or likest hovering dreams
  The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail thou Goddess, sage and holy,
Hail divinest Melancholy,
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The Sea-Nymphs, and their pow'rs offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended;
Thee bright-hair'd Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she (in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain).
Oft in glimmering bow'rs and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cyprus lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with Gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing:
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The Cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er th' accustom'd oak;
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray

Through the heav'n's wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm:
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tow'r,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds, or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
And of those Demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous tragedy
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower,
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as warbled to the string.
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek.

Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus night oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited morn appear,
Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kerchief'd in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown that Sylvan loves
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heaved stroke
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream

Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eyelids laid.
And as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or th' unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters pale,
And love the high embowed roof,
With antick pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light :
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full voic'd quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heav'n before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heav'n doth show,
And every herb that sips the dew ;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures Melancholy give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

SONNETS.

I. TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

O NIGHTINGALE, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still,
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love; O if Jove's will
Have link'd that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretell my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
Whether the Muse, or Love call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

II. TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings,
Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
Victory home, though new rebellions raise
Their Hydra heads, and the false North displays
Her broken league to imp their serpent wings.
O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,

(For what can war, but endless war still breed?)
Till truth and right from violence be freed,
And public faith clear'd from the shameful brand
Of public fraud. In vain doth valour bleed,
While avarice and rapine share the land.

III. TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,
And on the neck of crowned fortune proud
Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
To conquer still; peace hath her victories
No less renown'd than war: new foes arise
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains:
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

IV. TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER.

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
Than whom a better senator ne'er held
The helm of Rome, when gowns not arms repell'd
The fierce Epirot and the African bold,
Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
The drift of hollow states hard to be spell'd,
Then to advise how war may best upheld
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold
In all her equipage: besides to know
Both spiritual pow'r and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou hast learn'd, which few have done:

The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:
Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

V. ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT.

AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who having learn'd thy way
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

VI. ON HIS BLINDNESS.

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide;
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied,"
I fondly ask: But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

VII. TO MR. LAWRENCE.

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

VIII. TO CYRIAC SKINNER.

CYRIAC, whose grandsire on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause
Pronounc'd and in his volumes taught our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench;
To day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth, that after no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intends, and what the French.
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;
For other things mild Heav'n a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

IX. TO THE SAME.

CYRIAC, this three years day these eyes, tho' clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,

Bereft of light their seeing have forgot,
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heav'n's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, Friend, t' have lost them overplied
In liberty's defence my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side,
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask
Content though blind, had I no better guide.

X. ON HIS DECEASED WIFE.

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, tho' pale and faint.
Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the old Law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have,
Full sight of her in Heav'n without restraint,
Came, vested all in white, pure as her mind:
Her face was veil'd, yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd
So clear, as in no face with more delight.
But O, as to embrace me she inclin'd,
I wak'd, she fled, and day brought back my night.

NOTES.

COMUS.

THE metre, or measure, in which the poem is written, is called Heroic; because it is that which is best suited to the description of noble and heroic deeds or thoughts. Each line is divided into five feet; each foot consists of a short syllable preceding a long one, and is called an Iambus. Hence the metre is also called Iambic. The lines may be scanned thus:—

Bĕfōre | thĕ stār | rў thrēs | hŏld ōf | Jŏve's Court.||

Occasionally we shall find a difficulty in so scanning the lines, arising chiefly from the difference of pronunciation of particular words in Milton's time and our own; thus, in line 4, we have

Ĭn rē | giŏns mīld | ŏf cālm | ănd sē | rĕne air.||

And in line 11:

Ămōngst | thĕ ēn | thrŏn'd Gōds | ŏn saĭn | tĕd seāts.||

Sometimes we have a syllable too much:

Ăftĕr | thĭs mōr | tăl chānge | tŏ hĕr | truĕ sērv | ants.||

This metre is the one in which Shakespeare's plays, and almost all English dramas are written; it is employed, with the addition of *rhyme*, by Dryden, Pope, and most of our great poets; *without rhyme* by Milton himself in the "Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained."

"Comus," the God of Revelry.

"A Mask," or Masquerade, an entertainment in which the actors were masked.

LINE 2. *mansion*—not a *house*: but simply *an abiding place*; from *maneo*, to abide.

3. *aerial*—a word of four syllables, from aër, the air.

insphered. The word *sphere* means originally anything round. Hence, just as the word *round* came to be applied to any particular duties which occurred over and over again; so the word *sphere* came to be applied to the particular spot where people live and act; hence, *insphered* means gathered together, collected.

LINE 4. *serene*—pronounced sérene. Probably there was a resemblance to the sound of the French "serein."

7. *pestered.* This word, though it has rather fallen out of classical use, is quite good English; it signifies plagued, from *pestis*, a plague.

pinfold, or *penfold*—a place where sheep were penned or pinned; *i.e.*, shut up. We have both words in use—to pen or to fold sheep.

10. *after this mortal change*, perhaps "after this mortal has been changed for immortality;" or else "after this state of change is ended;" but cf. line 841.

14. *enthroned*, with the accent on the first, not enthronèd.

sainted seats—Sancta sedes, holy seats.

15. *but*—except, translated into Latin by nisi.

16. *ambrosial*—immortal. Ἀμβρόσιος is derived from ἀ, not, and βροτὸς, mortal; so that the two words are the same. The change of *m* into *b* is very common. Thus we have μορτὸς, μροτὸς (which is almost unpronounceable), and then βροτὸς.

weeds—garments. Thus we speak of a widow's weeds, a hermit's weeds.

20. *high and nether Jove. High Jove*, or Jove who reigns on high, is Jupiter; *nether Jove*, or Jove who reigns beneath, is Pluto. The word *nether* is found in Netherlands, or low lands, low countries, and in nethermost.

24. *to grace* is to show favour to; from gratia, favour.

25. *by course*—in turn. Zechariah served the priest's office in the order of his *course*. So we speak of various *courses*. The word is derived from *curro, cursum*, and the general meaning of the word is anything that *runs or moves*.

several government, seems to mean separate government, government by separate gods.

29. *blue-haired*—Lat. cœruleus.

30. *the falling sun*—Sol cadens—the setting sun.

31. *mickle trust*—much or great fidelity or faithfulness.

34. *lore*—learning.

37. *perplex'd*, to be pronounced pérplex'd.

38. *nodding horror. Horror* is derived from *horreo*, to bristle or stand on end; hence *nodding horror* refers only to the bristling boughs as they nod or bend.

39. *forlorn*—lost; from the German "verloren."

40. *peril*—to be pronounced quite quickly as one syllable.

48. *after the Tuscan mariners transformed.* In Latin this would be, Post Tuscos nautas mutatos.

49. Tuscan, Etruscan, Turseni, Tyrrheni, are only different forms of one and the same word; Etruria was famous for its enchantments, and hence the dwelling of the

enchantress Circe is very reasonably placed near that country.

LINE 51. *whose charmed cup whoever tasted; whoever* is the subject, and *cup* the object to the verb *tasted.*

59. *frolic*—signifies "dancing for joy." *Frolic of his age* is like the Latin, *æger animi*, sick *of* soul or *at* heart.

60. *Celtic.* The Celts were the original inhabitants of Gaul, Britain, Caledonia, and Hibernia. Their descendants are found in Wales, Ireland, the Highlands of Scotland, Cornwall, and parts of France, especially Brittany. They are the same people in their origin as the Galatæ, or Galatians, to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistle.

Iberian—Spanish, from the Iberus or Ebro.

65. *orient liquor*—sparkling wine.

66. *drouth*—formerly written drougth, is "that which dryeth;" hence, thirst.

71. *ounce*—the same as lynx.

83. *spun out of Iris' woof. Iris* is the rainbow; *woof*, from the verb to *weave*, denotes that which is woven.

87. *knows to still—i.e.*, knows how to still; cf. the Greek phrase Ἐπίσταται ποιεῖν.

88. *nor of less faith*—Quite as faithful as he is skilful.

90. *nearest to the present aid of this occasion*—nearest to render aid readily upon this occasion.

93. In this ode the lines are some Iambic, and some Trochaic. A Trochee consists of a long syllable followed by a short one, thus—

Thĕ stār | thăt bīds | thĕ Shēp | hĕrd fōld—Iambic.
Nōw thĕ | tōp ŏf | Hēāvĕn dŏth | hōld—Trochaic.

95. The Sun-God was supposed to drive a gilded chariot, drawn by fiery horses; and it is here spoken of as being cooled by plunging into the Atlantic Ocean.

98. *slope Sun*—the sun declining or *slipping* downwards.

100. *pacing—i.e.*, the sun.

105. *rigour*—strictness.

110. *saws*—sayings.

112. *starry quire*—The choir of the stars, which were supposed to move in harmony, and produce delightful music, known as the music of the spheres. The stars are here represented as moving in a dance, and leading the months and years with them.

115. *sounds—i.e.*, narrow inlets of the sea, as between Norway and Denmark.

116. *wavering morrice*—a morris, or morisco, is a *Moorish* dance, and the fishes are here represented as dancing in the moonlight.

LINE 118. *the pert fairies—pert* is perhaps from peritus, nimble; hence comes the word *malapert*; fairies and elves seem to be the same, though, perhaps here, the fairies are the females, and the elves the males.

121. *wakes and pastimes*—a *wake* is what its name denotes, a time of waking or watching. Originally, when a church was to be consecrated, the previous night was spent in fasting, as a *vigil* or *watch*. This *vigil* was called also a *wake*. Gradually, as the strictness of manners decayed, these *watches* were spent in feasting; and hence the word *wake* came to mean a *feast*, and frequently a riotous one. Thus the word retains nothing of the original idea, except that both in the *vigil* and in the *wake*, people are supposed not to sleep. In Scotland, among the poorer classes, it is customary to watch the dead body of one recently deceased; this watching is often accompanied with fasting, especially among desperate characters. It is called a *lyke-wake*. Hence, in Sir W. Scott's "Guy Mannering," one of the smugglers in the Kairn of Derncleugh is made to cry,

"Here's what will give him a rousing lyke-wake."

pastime—something to pass the time, an amusement.

123. *to prove*—to make trial of. Hence, armour of proof, armour well tested.

129. *Cotytto*—a Thracian Goddess, worshipped with obscene rites.

132. *spets*—spits, sends forth.

136. *utmost*—outmost; hence, in the Bible, outer darkness is simply utter darkness.

138. *babbling eastern scout—the nice morn*. The morning is represented as scrupulous and sensitive; it reveals things, which night conceals; it babbles of things, which would be done in silence in the night.

139. *nice morn*—scrupulous, or particular morning. Nice is often used for *particular*. Thus the *niceties* of an art are those things which only skilful artists can practise.

143. *beat the ground*—so in Latin "pulsare tellurem" is to dance.

144. *light fantastic*. These words are joined by Milton in L'Allegro 34:

"Come and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe."

fantastic (from the Greek φαίνομαι, φάντασμα, a vision) seems to mean so light and tripping as to seem like a vision, rather than a reality.

LINE 147. *shrouds*—hiding places. To *shroud* is to conceal, and a shroud was simply a covering. Near St. Paul's Cathedral there was a place called "The Shrouds," where sermons were preached, when the weather was too wet for people to come to the usual place, viz., Paul's Cross, which was in the open air. Hence, in the title page of some of Latimer's Sermons, we read "Preached in the Shrouds," or covered place.

148. *sure*, an adverb—surely.

151. *wily trains*—crafty devices. A *train* is anything *drawn out*, connected with *traho, to draw*. Hence a *train* is applied to various things; as a *train* of Artillery, a *train* (of a dress), a *train* of gunpowder, a *train* of attendants. Hence, also, a *train* of corn to allure birds; and hence *a trap*. To *train* a person away from his duty is to allure him from it.

154. *spungy air*—air which absorbs them.

156. *presentments*—objects presented to the sight.

161. *glozing*—from γλῶσσα, a tongue. To gloze is (1) to remark upon, to explain; (2) to explain *away* by specious words; (3) to speak speciously, to be "fair and false"; (4) to deceive.

165. *virtue*—power or strength. The *virtue* of anything is the power which it has of producing a result good or bad. The Greek ἀρετή and the Latin "virtus," denote the excellence of anything, rather than what we understand by virtue or goodness. Hence, *virtus* in Latin means *valour*, the proper excellence of a Roman, who was very often anything but *virtuous* in our sense. In English, we say "by virtue of," meaning "owing to," without at all implying anything of virtue in the idea.

171. *methought*—an old English impersonal verb; we may compare *it pities me*. The full form would be, "it thought me."

174. *unlettered hinds*—uneducated servants, or country people.

178. *swilled insolence*—insolence prompted by drunkenness.

179. *wassail*—a feast or revel; derived from the Saxon pledge, Wœs-hale, "May you be well or hale." Thus in Ivanhoe, the Friar drinks to the Black Knight, "Wœs-hale, Sir Sluggish Knight," to which the answer is "Drink hale, Holy Clerk."

189. *palmer's weed*—pilgrim's attire; the palmers were pilgrims, who carried a staff of *palm* on returning from the Holy Land.

190. *rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus wain*; the

idea of the sun-god driving a gilded chariot has been mentioned above. He is here represented as carrying the evening on the back of his chariot.

LINE 204. *single darkness;* darkness and nothing else. *Single* comes from singulus, alone.

205. *fantasy* or *phantasy*, and its shortened form *fancy*, are derived from φαίνω, to show. It signifies here "imaginations."

208. *syllable*—pronounce.

210. *may startle well—i.e.*, may well startle.

231. *airy shell*—some read "alry cell," which would perhaps be easier. But it is a rule which cannot be too soon learned, that when there are various readings, the easiest is usually the wrong one. Some editor, finding a word or phrase difficult, supplies an easier one; but, as a rule, the most difficult reading is the oldest. The word "*shell*" is here to be retained. Milton, as a good classical scholar, knew that the words *concha* and *testudo*, which mean shell, were also applied to musical instruments made in the shape of a shell, with strings stretched across; the shell serving for the sounding-board. Hence he represents *echo* as living in such a musical shell, which sent back the notes which it received.

231. *margent*—margin.

235. *her sad song mourneth well. Song* is the accusative of cognate meaning after the verb to mourn.

241. *parly*—from *parler*, to speak.

sphere—seems to mean the sky of heaven.

ravishment—from *rapio*, to carry away, to transport.

251. *at every fall*—a fall or cadence in music, is where the voice is allowed to die gradually away, almost into silence.

253. *Sirens*—these were supposed to be three birds, with the faces of maidens, who, by their songs allured the passers by to come to them, and then killed them. Their place of abode was supposed to be off the coast of Campania, between Caprea and Surrentum.

254. *flowery-kirtled Naiades.* A kirtle is a part of a woman's dress; perhaps derived from girdle.

Naiades—water nymphs.

255. *baleful*, or *baneful*, appear to be different forms of the same word, just as in Latin, *lymphaticus* is derived from *nympha*.

257. *lap*—to fold.

Scylla was a rock near Sicily. The story relates, that Scylla, the daughter of Phercys, having aroused the

jealousy of Circe, was transformed into a sea-monster, surrounded by dogs, who were perpetually barking. Scylla was a rock, and Charybdis a whirlpool, both perilous to sailors, on the passage between Sicily and Italy. Hence the famous line

"Incidit in Scyllam, qui vult vitare, Charybdim,"

meaning that people, in trying to avoid one danger, frequently rush into another.

LINE 273. *extreme shift*—to shift, is to try *every* means, and *any* means, to accomplish an end. Hence to *make shift*, is to put up with the worse, through lack of the better. *shift*, here means *difficulty* and *distress*, which reduced her to employ the best means in her power to call her brothers.

278. *labyrinth*—a tangled and intricate place. So called from the famous Labyrinth at Crete, made by Dœdalus.

287. The meaning is, "Is their loss of any great importance beyond your present need."

291. *laboured*—wearied with labour.

293. *swinked*—wearied.

299. The *element* here means the *air*.

301. *plighted*—not the past participle of "to pledge;" but connected with "plaited," and meaning folded together. We have in Greek the expression αἰθέρος πτυχαὶ, the folds of the air.

313. *bosky bourn*—bushy valley. *Bosky* is from the old word *boske*, which is the same as bush. *Bourn* means a *boundary* or *limit;* and also a deep valley, *separating* one ridge from another.

314. *shroud*—cf. line 147.

325. "*courtesy* first received its name in *courts* of princes; but people more frequently pretend to it there, than in lowly sheds."

329. "*square my trial to my proportioned strength.*" To *square* is to *equalize*. Hence the meaning is to make the trial and the strength equal and proportioned to one another.

332. *wont'st*—from the old verb to wont, which signifies to be accustomed. This verb is really the past participle of an old verb to wone—to dwell.

benison—blessing; from the French, *bénison*, derived from *benedicere*.

337. *some gentle taper*—the vocative case.

340. *long-levelled rule*—probably *a long line*. In the same way, in "Euripides, Supplices," 650, we read of ἡλίου κάνων, for a sun-beam.

LINE 341. Calisto, the daughter of Lycaon, King of Arcadia, was said to have been changed into the constellation of the Great Bear, and her son into that of the Lesser Bear, called also Cynosura; hence this line signifies, "Thou shalt be our greater or less Bear;" these being the stars by which the Phœnicians, the great navigators of antiquity, steered their course. Hence the phrase, "*Tyrian* Cynosure." For the word Cynosure, in the sense of something much observed, we may compare L'Allegro, line 80, "The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes."

344. *wattled cotes—wattled* is made of *withies*. *cote, cot, cottage* are the same word, and seem to signify anything which shelters. Hence a dove-*cot*, a child's *cot*.

349. *innumerous*—numberless.

359. *over-exquisite*—too curious; from *exquæro*.

360. *cast the fashion*. The idea is that of casting or calculating a nativity; it is a term used in astrology.

361. "suppose that they are really evils, even though unknown."

366. *so to seek*. The phrase "to seek" denotes "to wander at random," and implies that people do not find what they seek for.

367. *so unprincipled—i.e.*, ignorant of the principles or rudiments; from principium, a beginning.

369. *single want—only* the want. *single* is derived from the Latin singulus, and seems to mean "alone."

370. *not being in want*—the nominative absolute, corresponding to the Latin ablativus absolutus.

375. *flat sea*—æquor, a plain, level surface.

376. *seeks to*. This usage of the verb "to seek," is found in the Bible, Isaiah xi. 10, "*To* it shall the Gentiles seek."

378. *plumes her wings*. The word to plume generally means to dress the feathers (from pluma) or to adorn. Sometimes it has just the opposite meaning: to strip off the feathers. But instead of *plumes*, we ought, probably, to read "*prunes*;" for in Spenser, "Faery Queen," we find—

> "She gins her feathers, fowle disfigurèd,
> Prowdly to *prune* and sett on every side;"

And in Pope—

> "Where Contemplation *prunes* her ruffled wings."

380. *all-to*. To be read as one word. The word is perhaps an abbreviation of altogether. It signifies "entirely."

LINE 390. *weeds*—plain garments.

hermit—derived from the Greek ἔρημος, one who lives away from men.

393. The gardens of Hesperus produced golden fruit. They are referred to at line 981—2.

395. *Dragon*—from the Greek δρακὼν (which is from δέρκομαι, to see), denotes a sharp-sighted creature.

404. *It recks me not.* These impersonal verbs are to be noticed in connexion with such phrases as "methinks," "meseems."

410. *equal-poise.* We should use the word *equipoise.* It is derived from the French poise, which comes from the Latin, pendo, pensum, through the French *peser*, to weigh. We have in English "to poise," or balance a dart in taking aim; also the word, avoir-du-pois is used.

411. *arbitrate*—determines. The sense is "When the result depends equally upon things to be feared and to be hoped, I prefer hope."

413. *squint suspicion—squint*, or *asquint*, is probably the same word as "askance;" and suspicion is represented as glancing sideways at the object suspected.

419. *If Heaven gave it—i.e.*, even though Heaven gave it.

421. *cómplete*, with the accent on the *first* syllable, is common among our earlier writers.

422. *quivered.* Latin, pharetrata, carrying a quiver.

423. *unharboured*—wherein no harbour or refuge is found.

424. *infamous hills*—is a translation of Horace, Od. 1. iii. 20, infames scopulos, hills with an evil reputation.

425. *savage*—written also salvage—is from *silva*, a wood, and signifies an inhabitant of the forest.

429. *shagged with horrid shade.* This line is reproduced by Pope:—

"Ye grots and caverns, shagged with horrid thorn."

To shag is used for "to bruise, *shake*, or shatter," and shagged or shaggy means anything which bruises or tears; hence anything *rough*. We have another form of the same word in "shough," which is used for a rough-haired dog by Shakespeare.

horrid—horridus, bristling; cf. line 38.

430. *unblenched*—unalarmed. To blench, or to blanch, is to make white, or grow white; hence, to startle or make pale through fear. *Bleach* is derived from the same root.

431. *be it not—i.e.*, if it be not.

434. *meagre*—from macer, just as *eager* from *acer*—whence vinegar or vin aigre, sour wine.

LINE 435. The spirits of the dead were supposed to wander over the earth at night-time, and appear to their friends or enemies; at cock-crow they returned to their place. See Shakespeare, Hamlet.

436. *swart* or *swarthy*—black.

449. *freezed* is the regular perfect of the verb to freeze. *congealed*—from gelu, cold.

451. *dash*—to alarm.

455. *lackey*—to attend.

468. *imbodies and imbrutes*—becomes sensual and brutal. The idea contained in 455—475 is that. after the body and soul are united together, if a man lives a virtuous and pure life, his body is subdued to his spirit, and becomes daily more and more spiritual, till it loses the taint of earth and acquires immortality; on the other hand, if the life is unholy and impure, the soul loses its spiritual nature or essence, and becomes infected by the body, which is supposed to be, by its nature, base and brutalized. These were the ideas of Plato, the pupil of Socrates, who flourished B.C. 429—347. Henry More, a great friend of Milton, was a distinguished Platonist, or upholder of Plato's opinions.

470. The sensual soul is here represented as actually having a kind of bodily form, a damp, vapoury appearance.

471. *charnel*—from *caro, carnis*, a place of flesh.

474. This line has two syllables too much. Perhaps the rapid pronunciation of the word *sensuality, sensuality*, may account for its introduction here. A line of this kind, containing an extra foot, is known as an Alexandrine. This name is said to be derived from an old French poet, who introduced this kind of verse. *As a rule*, English poets only allowed themselves this licence when the thought and the sound seemed to accord, as in Pope's descriptive lines:

"A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
And like a wounded snake drags its slow length along."

The last line is *intended* to describe, by its sound, the slow movement of the snake.

495. *huddling*—hastening, rapid.

502. *trivial*. This word is derived from the Lat. trivium, a place where three roads meet; hence a place of common resort. *Trivial* is, therefore, slight or common.

516. *storied*—related. Story is abbreviated from History.

LINE 517. *Chimera*—See "Homer Il." vi. 212. (Lord Derby's Transl.):

"A monster sent from Heaven, not human born,
With head of lion, and a serpent's tail,
And body of a goat; and from her mouth
There issued flames of fiercely burning fire."

People soon began to disbelieve in so fanciful a creature, and hence the words chimera and chimerical are applied to anything fanciful and unreal.

520. *the navel*—the centre.

526. *murmurs*—*i.e.*, murmured incantations.

527. *of him*—the genitive after visage.

529. *unmoulding reason's mintage.* The mint is where money is coined. Hence *reason's mintage* means what is minted or stamped by reason, which Comus destroys.

530. *charactered*—from Χαρακτὴρ, a stamp. Hence the word is most appropriately used here. The pronunciation of this word with the accent on the second syllable is found in Shakespeare.

531. *croft*—a little farm.

539. *unweeting*, or *unwitting.* Wit, wot, wisdom, have the same root, and denote knowledge. Hence unweeting is unwary, or ignorant.

540. *by then—were in fold.* This sentence is parenthetical, unless we take *by then* to be *by the time when.*

542. *besprent*—besprinkled.

548. *ere a close*—*i.e.*, ere my music came to a conclusion.

550. *dissonance*—discordant sounds.

551. *listened them*—*i.e.*, to them, just as we say "write him" for "write to him."

553. *respite*—from the Latin *respectus*, a time to look back.

558. *was took ere she was ware*—was caught before she was aware of it.

559. "Silence wished that she might no longer exist, if she might always be displaced by so sweet a sound."

585. *period*—a sentence.

604. *Acheron.* The pit of Acheron used generally for Hell.

605. *Harpies*—creatures with the faces of women and the wings of birds.

Hydras. The Hydra of Lerna was a serpent with a hundred heads, killed by Hercules. The word is here used for any infernal snake.

617. *utmost shifts.* See line 273.

618. *surprisal.* For this form of the word we may compare the word "reprisal," "requital."

620. *of small regard to see to.* Of little importance to look at.

LINE 621. *virtuous plant—i.e.*, plant possessing virtue or power.

627. *simples—i.e.*, simple remedies.

634. *like esteemed*—esteemed as much as it was known; that is, not at all.

635. *clouted shoon*—mended shoes. For this form of the plural, we may compare oxen, swine, kine (from kye or cow).

636. Scan as follows:

And yet | more med | 'cinal is | it than | that mo | ly.

The word *medicinal* is here pronounced rapidly as if consisting of only two syllables; and its pronunciation may be compared with that of *sensuality* in the line 474. *Medicine* and *venison* are properly pronounced as words of *two* syllables.

Moly (μωλὺ) was a herb given to Ulysses by the God Hermes to protect him against the charms of Circe.

642. *I pursed* it up—put it in my purse.

little reckoning made—made little account of it.

647. *came off*—escaped.

649. *necromancer*—from νεκρὸς, dead, and μαντεία, prophecy; a wizard, who foretells the future by holding intercourse with the dead: as the witch of Endor. Hence any enchanter.

650. *where if he be*—ubi si sit. The English where, like the Latin relative pronoun and relative particles, is often better understood by changing it into "and—there." Thus, if we read this passage, "And if he be there," it will have no difficulty.

655. "*the Sons of Vulcan:*" alluding probably to Cacus, who in his combat with Hercules (An. viii. 252), is described as vomiting forth much smoke.

660. *chained up in alabaster*—become as rigid as stone.

661. *Daphne* was changed into a laurel; hence the epithet root-bound, fastened by the roots. The order of the words is "Root-bound, as was Daphne, who fled Apollo."

664. *corporal rind*—the body is the rind, which encircles the soul within.

672. *cordial julep*—cheering or enlivening drink. *Cordial* is derived from *cor*, the heart; and hence means that which stirs the heart.

675. *Nepenthes*—from νη πένθος, that which removes grief.

682. *invert the covenants of her trust.* A covenant is an agreement between two parties. The lady is said to act in a way opposite to that in which Nature intended that she should act, when she entrusted so much beauty to her.

685. *unexempt condition*—the condition from which no one is free.

694. *aspéct* with the accent on the last syllable, like respéct.

707. The *Stoics*, so called from Stoa or Porch, where they met, were the followers of Zenocrates, who held that pain was no evil, and that all good men were above the reach of mortal ills. They were a stern set of men, with a high sense of duty; but often pitiless and morose, always severe. The best of the Romans held Stoic opinions.

budge is said to mean originally "fur," or lamb's wool; and Budge Row is said to have taken its name from the furriers who resided in that neighbourhood. How the word came to mean, as it does here, "severe, crabbed," it is difficult to see. There is a verb "to budge," which means to move slowly and reluctantly.

fur seems to mean the cloak, which these philosophers wore; and the whole line to signify, "The harsh doctrines of the Stoics."

708. *cynic tub*—Diogenes, the great cynic, is said to have lived in a tub or barrel, in preference to a house. The word cynic is derived from κύων a dog, from the propensity of these philosophers to snarl at the rest of the world.

719. *hutched*—stored. A hutch is a place for storing anything.

720. *pet*—ill-temper.

722. *frieze*—coarse cloth.

737. *cosen*—deceive. Shakespeare has the line—

"Cousins indeed, and by their uncle cozened."

745. *brag* (connected withthe word to bray) is that at which a person makes a great outcry.

751. *ply*—from plico, to knit or weave.

752. *tease the huswife's wool.* "Tease" means to pluck or pull. In Latin, the word *vexare* is used in the same manner.

759. *to prank* is to dress out, make a parade, and is connected with the word "*to prance.*"

760. *to bolt*, or *boult*, signifies to separate the bran from the flour. Hence to refine; hence to be subtle and use fine-drawn arguments.

773. in un | super | fluous even | propor | tion.

The word *even*, is pronounced as one syllable, e'en. It is an adjective.

774. *no whit*—not a whit.

790. *fence*—art of fencing or parrying. Here used of skill in arguing.

LINE 790. *brute earth*, Bruta tellus—the senseless earth. Brutus, the deliverer of Rome from Tarquin, was called so because of his pretended stupidity and dulness.

808. *canon-laws*, more simply, canons or rules. *Canonical* is that which is according to the canon or rule of the Church.

817. *backward mutters*—incantations consisting of words said backwards. The same words which had bound her to her seat, would, if reversed by Comus, unbind her. Everything was to be done backwards, the rod reversed—*i.e.*, moved from left to right, instead of from right to left; the charm to be repeated in a reverse order, and then, and not till then, would the lady be free.

823. *soothest*—truest, most faithful. *In sooth* is, in truth; sooth to say, to speak the truth.

827. *whilome*—at some time. An Anglo-Saxon word.

828. *Brute.* Geoffrey of Monmouth, an old chronicler, tells us that Brutus, the son of Ascanius, and grandson of Æneas, came to Britain, and was the first king; and that the land was called Brutania, or Britannia after him.

832. *cross-flowing*—flowing across.

836. piteous *of* her woes. The genitive in imitation of the Latin "Miseret te aliorum."

lank—descriptive of the appearance of a person drowned.

837. *lavers*—from lavo, to wash.

841. *an immortal change* is a change to immortality; contrast with this *a mortal change*, which seems to mean a change from mortality.

845. *helping*—giving her aid *against* all blighting winds and signs of ill-luck.

urchin, or hedge-hog, was considered to be a creature of a malicious nature, and of ill-omen. Thus in Macbeth we have

"Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.
Thrice; and once the hedge-pig whined."

868. Observe the epithets, which are all highly classical.

Great Oceanus.—*Ὠκεανον τε μέγαν.*

Earth-shaking.—*Ἐννοσίγαιος* or *ἐνοσίχθων.*

Tethys was the wife of Oceanus—*πότνια Τηθύς.*

Hoary Nereus—grandavus Nereus.

The Carpathian wizard is Proteus—Neptune's shepherd; hence represented with a hook or shepherd's crook.

Triton—Neptune's Trumpeter; cf. this use of the word *shell* with line 231.

Glaucus—a sea-god, who, we are told, prophesied to the gods.

Leucothea—the white goddess, another name of Ino, who cast herself, with her son Melicerta in her arms, into the sea, to escape the fury of her husband.

Thetis, tinsel-slippered feet—Ἀργυρόπεζα Θέτις.

Parthenope and Ligea were two of the Sirens.

LINE 882. *sleeking*—making sleek or smooth.

893. *azurn*—azure, blue.
sheen—shine, brightness.

894. *turkis*—turquoise.

922. *Locrine* was the son of Brutus, the descendant of Æneas, the son of Anchises. Sabrina is the Tutelary Goddess of the river Severn.

936. "And may thy banks here and there be crowned upon with groves of myrrh and cinnamon." *Banks* is the nominative case.

946. *furlong*—derived from furrow. A furlong is a furrow-long.

955. *cheer*—cheerfulness.

960. *duck*—the awkward salutation of the Shepherds.
The order is, "Here are other trippings of lighter toes to be trod." The rough dances of the Shepherds are to give way to the courtly advance of the Lady and her Brothers.

970. *timely*—betimes, early.

972. *assays*—or essays, are trials, perhaps derived from "to say."

978. The sun is the eye of the day; and in those realms, to which the Spirit refers, never sets.

982. The daughters of Hesperus, or the Hesperides, kept watch over the golden apples in the gardens of Atlas. Hesperus is the west, where the sun sets, and the golden hues of evening suggested the idea of the garden with golden apples.

984. *crisped shades.* The foliage of trees is, in Latin, *comæ*, or hair; and the locks which adorned the trees are here represented as crisped or curling.

993. *blow;* here used in an active sense.

995. *purfled*—or purfiled—from French "pourfiler," to embroider or surround with a thread (filum) or border.

1002. *Assyrian Queen*—Venus.

1003. *sheen*—brightness; from the verb "to shine;" cf. "The sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea."

1015. *welkin.* To welk is to roll or curve. *Bowed welkin* is the sloping sky.

1017. *corners of the moon.* The Latin phrase is cornua lunæ. Shakespeare, Macbeth, Act III., sc. v., has—

"Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound."

21. *sphery chime.* The place where the chime or music of the spheres is heard; Heaven.
22. The sense of the last two lines is, If virtue were too feeble to ascend to Heaven, Heaven would come down to her.

LYCIDAS.

R 1. *yet once more*—Still once again. Milton refers to his previous poems.
2. *laurels, myrtles,* and *ivy* are plants which are sacred to poetry.
sere—yellow, withered.
3. *crude*—unripe, hard; from Latin *crudus.*
5. *mellowing year*—the time of year which ripens the fruit.
6. *bitter constraint*—hard necessity.
dear—from the old English word, to dere, which means to hurt. Hence dear is painful.
9. *peer*—from *par,* an equal. Peers are those of equal rank. Hence one of the privileges of Magna Charta, that a man shall be tried by his peers or equals.
10. *he knew to sing*—cf. Comus, 87.
11. *and build the lofty rhyme.* In Latin, "condere carmen."
13. *welter*—to roll or toss about.
14. *melodious tear*—sad poetry; called by a contemporary of Milton, "tears in tune."
15. *sisters of the sacred well*—the Muses. The sacred well or spring is Helicon.
18. *coy*—from the old French "quoy," which is derived from quietus, and signifies affecting quiet or retirement. It is generally used only of persons.
19. *so*—in like manner.
20. *destined urn*—the urn which is destined to hold my ashes.
21. *as he* passes. The Muses are female; but the Muse in line 19 means the Poet inspired by the Muse.
26. *opening eyelids of the morn.* In Job iii. 9 our version has "neither let it see the dawning of the day," and in the margin, "the eyelids of the morn." cf. Comus, 978, where day never shuts his eye.
27. *afield*—into the field. In the same way we have abed aback, ajar, akin, etc., compounded of the preposition *on* and a substantive.

IE 28. "We heard the gray fly, *what time* (at the time when) she winds her sultry horn."

29. *battening.* Batten is to fatten—connected with bait.

31. *westering wheel.* To *wester* is to draw towards the west.

33. *temper*, from tempero, to restrain, or modulate.
oaten—made of oat-straw.

39. *thee*—is the object of the verb "mourn."

46. *weanling*—a young animal just weaned. The termination, *ling*, as in duckling, suckling, has the force of a diminutive; it seems to be derived from the verb to long, or belong, and denotes the young or child *belonging* to anything.

54. *Mona*—the Isle of Anglesey.

55. *Deva*—the Dee. There is a tradition that the Dee, by the changes of its fords, foretold good or evil, peace or war, dearth or plenty. Hence it is called "*Wizard.*"

57. "Had ye been there, it would have been vain: for what could it have availed?"

58. *Orpheus* was the son of the Muse Calliope; he was killed by the Thracian women (who were enraged at his constancy to his dead wife, Eurydice), and his head thrown into the river Hebrus.

61. *rout—i.e.*, crowd; cf. Comus, 533. Monstrous rout.

64. *what boots it*—what advantage is it.

65. *meditate the thankless muse*—So Virg., Ecl. i. 2.

"Silvestrem tenui Musam meditaris avenâ."

67. *use*—are used to do.

75. *Atropos* was one of the Fates—not of the Furies or Eumenides. But Milton only means to represent the Fate as cruel and relentless. He does not confound the Fates with the Furies.

79. "Famè is not set off to the world in glistering or bright foil." *Foil*, derived from folium, is metal beaten out thin as a leaf, and used as a setting for precious stones.

81. *by*—here seems to mean near to.

83. *lastly*—at the last.

86. *Arethuse*—a celebrated spring near Syracuse. In scanning this line, the second foot consists of three syllables:

O foun | tain Are | thuse and | thou ho | noured flood. |

90. *in Neptune's plea*—on behalf of Neptune. A plea is answer or reason, *pleaded* in answer to an accusation.

91. *felon*—cruel, derived from *fell.*

94. *beaked*—pointed.

LINE 96. *Hippotades.* Æolus was the son of Hippotas, the patronymic of which is Hippotades.

97. *was strayed.* This form of the past tenses, by the use of the verb "to be," is quite correct with verbs denoting motion.

103. *Camus*—the river Cam at Cambridge. He is described with a hairy mantle and sedge bonnet, to denote the sedge and rushes on the banks of that river.

105. *sanguine flower inscribed with woe.* The hyacinth, or gladiolus, said to have been named after a beautiful youth, slain by Apollo, from whose blood sprang the flower, marked with the word AI, *alas.*

107. *pledge*—child. Lat. pignus.

109. The *Pilot* is St. Peter, who was a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee, and to whom our Lord addressed his words respecting the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.—St. Matt. xvi. 19.

113. *for* thee—instead of thee.

121. *what recks it them?* What care they.

they are sped. To speed is to bring to a favourable termination. Hence, they are sped, means they have succeeded; cf. Judges v. 30.

123. *lean and flashy songs*—empty and spiritless. *Flashy* is that which is glittering on the outside. Hence, what is showy, but not substantial.

124. *scrannel*—harsh, shrieking.

130. *two-headed engine.* The axe, or two-handed sword, used for executions. Milton has been attacking the abuses of the Church of England under Archbishop Laud, and he here seems to hint that the axe is about to fall once and for all. He probably thought that the death of Laud would be a fatal blow to what he called Prelacy. Had Laud seen these lines, possibly the pillory might have been Milton's lot.

136. *use*—frequent, inhabit.

138. *swart*-star—swart, swarthy. The dog-star is called swart, because it appears in the hot weather, when things become dark with the heat.

sparely looks—looks slightly or scarcely.

139. *quaint* (see Comus) is *carefully adorned.*

eyes. The daisies resemble eyes. To *inoculate* is a term used for propagating plants by inserting an *eye*, or bud. Hence we see that the word *eye* is equivalent to *bud.*

140. *honied showers*—showers that give moisture and sweetness to the flowers.

141. *purple*—to make bright.

LINE 142. *rathe* is early. Its comparative is *rather*, and the superlative *rathest* is found. *Rather*, therefore, is the same as *sooner*, and we find the word used, as equivalent, in the phrase, "I would sooner not do it," or, "I would rather not."

forsaken—i.e., by the sun, because it blooms in the shade.

144. *freaked.* A freak, freck, or freckle, is a spot or mark.

151. *laureate hearse*—laurel-clad hearse.

152. *to interpose a little ease*—to place a little ease between us and our sorrows.

153. *frail thoughts*—weak thought, from fragilis and frango.

dally with false surmise—play with fanciful ideas.

158. *monstrous world*—world of monsters.

159. *moist vows*—weeping, tearful prayers.

161. *the great vision of the guarded mount.* The mount is St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, which faces directly towards Spain. Hence it is said to face towards Namanco's and Bayona's hold. St. Michael's Mount obtained its name from a legend, which told how St. Michael, the Archangel, had appeared there.

163. the *Angel* is St. Michael, who had his abode in this mount, which looked towards Spain. He is asked to look *homeward.*

ruth is pity; hence *ruthless*, pitiless.

166. *your sorrow—i.e.*, for whom you weep. Just as he might have said "your love."

170. *tricks.* To trick is to adorn, beautify.

174. The order is, "Where along other groves."

175. *oozy*—wet. The river *Ouse* means *water;* and the word is no doubt connected with *oozy.*

laves—washes. French, *lave.*

176. *unexpressive—i.e.*, which cannot be uttered or expressed. St. Paul heard "unspeakable words." It does not mean *expressionless.*

188. *stops* are the holes in the pipe, by stopping which a variety of sounds is produced.

190. *had stretched out all the hills.* The sun had lengthened out the shadows of the hills. It was evening. He played from morn till night.

L'ALLEGRO.

THE PRAISES OF MIRTH OR JOYOUSNESS.

LINE 1. *hence*—away, depart.

3. *forlorn*—deserted.

5. *uncouth*—derived from the Anglo-Saxon "uncuth," and related to the word to ken, or know. Hence uncouth is unknown.

8. *ebon*—of ebony, black.

9. *ragged*—uneven, rough.

10. *Cimmerian.* The Cimmerians were a fabulous people, who dwelt between Baiæ and Cumæ, in Italy, and were supposed to live in perpetual darkness. They are *not* the Cimmerii from whom the Crimea and the Cymri (or Welsh) take their name.

11. *free*—liberal, kind-hearted.

12. *ycleped*—called from the old verb "clepe." This old form of the participle is common in early English. It is still found in German, where the participles are formed by prefixing *ge.* Hence we learn that English and German had a common origin. Other forms are yclad, yrann.

Euphrosyne—joy, from εὖ, φρονέω.

24. *buxom*—easily bowed or bended, pliant. Hence, kindly.

blithe—happy.

debonair—from the French "de bon air," of good temper or disposition. Another derivation is given, "debonarius," a late Latin word, but the first is more probable.

27. *quips.* *Quip* is shortened from *quibble,* which is derived from quidlibet—something light and unimportant, a joke or jest. In Shakespeare we have "Quips and quiddities," that is "quidlibets and quids." It here means a mischievous jest.

cranks—cross-purposes.

28. *becks*—beckonings.

wreathed smiles. To wreath or writhe is properly to wind. The word here refers to the appearance of the face when smiling.

34. *fantastic*—like a spirit; cf. Comus, 140.

40. *unreproved*—blameless.

41. This line depends upon the words "admit me," in line 38.

45. Admit me, or permit me, to come and bid good-morrow.

As if he said, "If Joy will not admit me to his party, I shall not be able to be joyful."

LINE 50. *scatters the rear of darkness thin*—chases away the last grey shades of night.

53. Permit me to act thus—*often listening.* The whole sentence, down to line 68, depends upon "admit me" in line 38.

57. *not unseen.* He does not shun society, as if he were sad.

59. *begins his state*—begins his royal progress. "He cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course."

62. *the clouds*—dight. A nominative absolute.
dight—another form of deckèd.

65. *blithe*—blithely, happily.

66. *sithe.* The word may be spelt either thus or *scythe.* The latter spelling was adopted probably from an idea that *scythe* was connected with *Scythian.* It is not, but from a Saxon word signifying *to cut.*

67. *tells his tale;* that is, numbers his sheep to see that none are lost. Thus we read of the *tale* (or full number) of the bricks made by the Israelites in Egypt; and to *tell* is to *number.*

75. *pied*—variegated, many-coloured. The magpie is called so from the variety of its plumage, and the word *piebald* has the same meaning.

80. *Cynosure.* A name of the constellation of the Lesser Bear, by which sailors steered their course. Hence, "anything much observed and admired."

89. "or if the season be earlier, she goes to the brown haystack in the meadow;" if it is harvest, she goes to bind sheaves; if haytime, to help in gathering in the hay.

94. *rebecks* are stringed instruments. The word is probably of Moorish origin, by whom it was called *rebeb.* It passed from Spain into Italy, where it was called ribeca.

96. *chequered*—from the trellice-work of shades formed by the sun shining through the boughs.

100. *then*—*i.e.*, after the daylight fails.
spicy ale—ale flavoured with spice.

102. *junkets* are curd-cheeses, served between coverings of reeds (French, jaune) or straw, and were the common food at village feasts. The word for cream-cheese, in French, is *jonchée.*

103. Two people (she and he) are supposed to be telling tales of fairies. *She* tells how she was pinched and pulled.

104. *Friar's lantern*—Jack o'Lantern, or Will o' the Wisp.
Robin Goodfellow was supposed to be a hobgoblin, who, for a bowl of milk, would thresh out more corn in

one night than ten workmen could accomplish in a day.

LINE 110. *lubber*. The words lob, lubber, looby, all signify lazy, sluggish, inactive.

114. *matin rings*—gives note that it is day.

115. *done the tales*—nominative absolute.

117. *then*—after sunset. See line 100.

120. *weeds of peace*—garments of peace. See Comus, 16.
triumphs—splendid festivals.

123. *both*—wit and arms.
her grace—the favour of her, whom all commend.

128. *masks*—dances or plays in which the actors wore masks.
pageants—fanciful processions, called antique, because the characters represented were generally mythical.

131. *then*. See lines 100 and 117.

132. *Jonson*—Rare Ben Jonson, died A.D. 1638; the contemporary and almost the rival of Shakespeare. Of the writings of the two it has been remarked that, reading Ben Jonson, you wonder that ever man should have had such thoughts; and reading Shakespeare, you wonder that such thoughts never occurred to you before. Milton here says that Shakespeare pleased through a certain wild and native elegance.

135. *eating cares*—devouring cares.

137. *married*—music accompanied by, united with poetry.

138. *meeting soul*. The soul goes out to meet the music, which calls it from its retirement.

139. *bout* is a fold or twist. Here it denotes an intricate piece of music.

140. *linked sweetness long drawn out*—sweet sounds in a long succession, a long chain of sweet sounds.

141. *wanton heed, and giddy cunning*. Cunning—kenning knowledge. We read, "May my right hand forget her cunning." The music is *apparently* careless, *really* skilful; its art is concealed under a pretence of artlessness.

142. The voice runs through intricate strains, and lets loose every chain that restrains the hidden soul of music.

149. Orpheus, by his music, recovered his wife on the condition that he should not look back upon her till she was in the upper air. He *did* look back, and she returned to the shades. Hence she was only half-regained. Milton says, "had he sung mirthful music, Pluto would have *quite* resigned her."

IL PENSEROSO,

THE PRAISES OF MELANCHOLY.

INE 3. *bestead*—to *be* in *stead* of, to give aid.
6. *fond*—foolish.
9. *likest*—the superlative of like.
10. *fickle*—flitting, changing.
pensioners—attendants; properly persons *paid* for what they do (pendo, to pay); hence servants, followers, attendants. The word has now received the meaning of persons who receive pay for what they *have* done and can do no longer.
Morpheus, the God of sleep.
14. *to hit the sense*—to be perceptible.
17. Understand—"Black, but only such black as in men's thoughts might become (or be suitable to) a sister of Memnon." Memnon was an Ethiopian ally of the Trojans.
19. *starred Ethiop Queen*. Cassiope, wife of the King of Ethiopia, boasted herself more beautiful than the Nereids, who, in punishment of this arrogance, sent a sea-monster to vex the Ethiopians. The only method of freeing the country from this pest was to offer the King's daughter, Andromeda, as a prey to the monster. This was done, but Andromeda was delivered by Perseus, and Cassiope was translated into the heavens, and became a constellation. Hence she is called "*starred*."
25. *his daughter she*. She being his daughter. Nominative absolute, a woman.
31. *nun*—a woman who lives in solitude.
32. *sober*—is sober-minded, temperate.
stedfast—*i.e.*, orderly, not subject to violent changes.
demure—de bons mœurs, well-mannered.
33. *grain*—colour or dye.
35. *sable stole*—black robe. A stole was a veil which covered the head and shoulders.
Cyprus lawn—very fine linen, made in Cyprus. In Shakespeare's "Winter's Tale," Act IV., sc. iii., we have—

"Cyprus black as e'er was crow."

37. *keep thy state*—preserve thy accustomed dignity.

LINE 39. *commércing*—holding intercourse.

40. *rapt*—from rapio; literally, *carried away*. Hence the word rapture, which, like the Greek word ecstasy, is rendered into English by the words "beside oneself," as when we say a person is beside himself, or carried away with joy.

42. *forget thyself to marble*—become fixed as marble in thy contemplations.

43. *sad leaden downward cast. Leaden* expresses dulness; hence we must understand it to mean a sad casting down of the eyes in dejection.

46. *diet*—live; from the Greek δίαιτα.

53. *contemplation*—to be pronounced as five syllables.

55. *hist.* To hist is to bid "hush," or keep silence. To *hist the silence* is to bid it come quietly with you.

56. *Philomel*—the nightingale.

59. *Cynthia*—the moon.
dragon yoke—team of dragons. *Yoke* is derived from Latin jugum; and signifies like jugum, either a yoke, or the whole chariot, or the horses yoked to it.

63. *chauntress*—songstress. The feminine of chanter, or chaunter.

64. *even-song.* Here used literally for song in the evening. It usually denotes religious service in the evening.

65. *unseen.* In L'Allegro he walks *not* unseen, in the morning and *not* in the evening.

68. *noon.* Said to be derived from *nona*, the ninth hour of the day, or three o'clock by our reckoning. It here means the time at which the moon is at its height.

78. *still, removed*—quiet and remote.

83. the watchman, as he passed on his rounds, used to utter some form of benediction to deliver the house from ghostly enemies, as his watchfulness and care defended it from mortal foes.

89. *unsphere the spirit of Plato*—bring down the spirit of Plato from the spheres or heaven.

93. *of those demons.* Understand the words "to unsphere the Spirits." "Demons" here are disembodied spirits.

98. *scepter'd pall.* A pall (palla) was simply a robe, and scepter'd pall is a royal robe. Tragedy has usually the deeds of great men and princes for its subject; as, for example, the stories of Œdipus and Antigone, who were of the royal house of Thebes; of Agamemnon and Orestes, the descendants of Pelops.

101. *what*—whatever.

102. *buskin'd.* The buskin, or high boot (Lat. cothurnus),

was appropriated to Tragedy, and is contrasted with the sock (soccus) or low shoes worn in Comedy. Hence the buskin'd stage is the tragic stage.

LINE 104. *Musæus* and *Orpheus* were two ancient half-mythical Greek poets.

108. referring to the story of Eurydice, for another allusion to which cf. L'Allegro, 150.

110. *the story of Cambuscan.* This refers to Geoffrey Chaucer's "Knight's Tale."

113. *virtuous*—possessing virtue—*i.e.*, strength or power; cf. Comus, 621.

118. *turney*—tournaments; *trophies* hung; trophies were formed of a collection of the arms of the vanquished hung up as a memorial of victory.

122. *civil-suited*—quietly dressed.

123. *trick'd and frounc'd.* To *trick* is to dress out in finery, as in Lycidas, 170; *frounced*, to frounce, is first to wrinkle or frown, then to plait or twine; here it is to decorate.

124. *the Attic boy*—Cephalus, of whom Aurora was enamoured.

125. *kerchieft.* A kerchief (from the French couvre-chef) is a veil for the head; hence, kercheft is veiled.

127. *still*—quiet, gentle.

130. *minute drops*—drops falling constantly and at regular intervals.

132. *me*—the object of the verb "bring."

135. *monumental oak*—oaks that stand like tall monuments.

140. *garish eye*—the glaring sun.

145. *consort*—unison, harmony of sound.

147—150. The sense is: And let some strange mysterious dream wave at the wings of sleep, with a stream of airy (unreal) figures displayed in lively portraiture (life-like shapes).

151. *breathe.* Imperative, let it breathe.

155. *due feet*—due is from Latin debitus. It is the root of dutiful, and here means "which ought to do so."

156. *studious cloister's pale—i.e.*, the pale of the studious cloister.

pale is a *limited space.*

cloister, from Latin claudo, to shut—an enclosed place. Hence the place whither studious men and monks retired for reflection. It has been suggested that Milton is here thinking of his old school, St. Paul's, close to the Cathedral, and that the high embowed roof and antique pillars may have been those of the adjoining Cathedral of (old) St. Paul's, where

his first aspirations after learning and reflection were experienced.

LINE 157. *high-embowed*—with high bows or arches. Observe that arch is derived from arcus, a bow.

158. *antick*—antique, from the old Latin form *anticus*.
massy proof—massive strength.

159. *storied windows*—windows painted with stories or histories of saints and sacred events.
dight—past participle of to deck; cf. L'Allegro, 62.

164. *as*—supply *such*; Lat. qualis.

169. *hairy gown*—cf. Comus, 390; a hermit's weeds.

170. *spell of*—tell of, inquire about. Gospel is *good spell*, or glad tidings—a literal translation of εὐαγγέλιον.

SONNETS.

I. THE NIGHTINGALE.

4. *jolly hours*—pleasant hours; cf. Comus, 986.
The nightingale is supposed to begin to sing in April.
In scanning this line we must make the first *three* syllables into one foot.

5. *close the eye of day*—sing the day to sleep.

6. *timely*—early, in good time.
rude bird of hate—the cuckoo.

II. TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.

Sir Thomas Fairfax, afterwards Lord Fairfax, was commander-in-chief and principal leader of the Parliamentary forces, till Cromwell's military genius raised him to undisputed pre-eminence.

5. *virtue*—valour. Lat. virtus.

7. *false North*—Scotland; called false because the Parliament held that the Scotch had broken the Solemn League and Covenant by their advance into England under the Marquis of Hamilton, A.D. 1648, where they were defeated at Preston, Aug. 17.

III. TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

7. *Darwen*, or Derwent—a stream near Preston, where Cromwell defeated Hamilton.
Dunbar—Cromwell defeated the Scottish General Leslie

at Dunbar, Sept. 3, 1650, and on Sept. 3, 1651, he defeated Prince Charles at Worcester. This he called "the crowning mercy," and Milton speaks of the laureat wreath, or wreath of laurels, which was the appropriate symbol of complete victory.

LINE 12, *secular chains*. Cromwell was asked to put down sectaries by force—the secular arm, as opposed to spiritual power.

13, *hireling wolves*. Milton refers to the Presbyterian clergy, to whom he attributes avarice and the desire for wealth as the motive of their actions.

14. *maw*—appetite, greediness.

IV. TO SIR HENRY VANE, THE YOUNGER.

Sir Henry Vane was the chief of the Independents, the contriver of the Solemn League and Covenant.

3. *gowns*. The toga was the dress of the Roman citizen in peace. The citizens of Rome repelled Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, and Hannibal, the African.

6. *hollow states*—Holland.
hard to be spelled—difficult to read and understand.

12. *either sword*—the temporal and the spiritual power.

V. ON THE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT.

In 1655, the Duke of Savoy endeavoured to compel his Protestant subjects in Piedmont to adopt the Roman Catholic faith. Those who refused to obey were barbarously massacred. Cromwell proclaimed a general fast in England, and a fund, amounting to forty thousand pounds, was collected for the Piedmontese. The Duke, alarmed at the attitude of England, withdrew his army, and peace was restored to the valleys of Piedmont.

4. It is said that the Piedmontese preserved the purity of the Christian religion, when the Church of Rome became corrupt.

12. *triple tyrant*. The Pope; so called from his triple crown.

14. *Babylonian woe*—Anti-Christ.

VI. ON HIS BLINDNESS.

2. *ere half my days*—before half my days are done.

3. *and that one talent*—depends upon "consider." He represents himself as possessed of only one talent, and fears lest, like the slothful servant in the parable, he may be hiding it in a napkin.

LINE 4. *though my soul more bent—i.e.*, when I consider my soul more eager to serve my Maker. Through the whole sentence the words, *when I consider* must be supplied.

7. *light denied*—light being denied. Nominative absolute.

VII. TO MR. LAWRENCE.

Henry Lawrence, the father, was president of Cromwell's Council.

4. *sullen*—dull, gloomy.

6. *Favonius*—or Zephyrus, the west wind.

10. *Attic taste.* Athens was the chief town of Attica, and the leader of Greece in all the sciences and fine arts. Hence *Attic* means refined.

13. *spare to interpose them*—can find time to introduce them as a relief from more serious pursuits.

VIII. TO CYRIACK SKINNER.

2. *Themis*—the Goddess of Law.

5. *Resolve to drown deep thoughts in mirth, which after it draws no repentance. After* for *afterwards;* like Latin "ante" for "antea."

7. *Archimedes*, the great mathematician of Syracuse, who offered to move the world with his lever if some one would find a fulcrum against which to rest it. During the siege of Syracuse, B.C. 214, he enabled the defenders to annoy their Roman besiegers by instruments of his invention. When the city was captured he was slain, being so intent over a problem that he gave no answer to the soldier who summoned him to surrender.

8. The Swedes were at war with Poland at the time, and the French with the Spaniards in the Low Countries.

12. *in show*—in appearance.

IX. TO THE SAME.

4. *idle*—inactive.

7. *bate a jot*—diminish, abate in the smallest degree. A jot or an iota was the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet. Hence used for anything very small.

10. *them—i.e.*, the eyes.

X. ON HIS DECEASED WIFE.

2. *Alcestis*—the wife of Admetus, king of Pheræ, resigned her own life for her husband, but was brought back from death by Hercules.

3. *Jove's great son*—Hercules.

5. *as whom*—like one whom.

9. *vested*—clothed.

10. *fancied sight*—the sights which I imagined I enjoyed.

14. *my night*—blindness.